THE SHAKERITE

April 24, 2012 // Volume 82 // Issue 8

DOES THIS LOOK THREATENING?

The alleged murder of Trayvon Martin sparks contention over profiling and gun laws

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Expanded Courtyard Garden Takes Root

When finished, space will provide new opportunities for students

JULIA SCHARFSTEIN CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

By late spring or next fall, students will have another outdoor area in which to enjoy their lunch.

After the Garden Club and Green Club proposed extending the courtyard garden last year, they came up with a design, and presented it to Art Department Chairman Dan Whitely. Whitely refined it, and then a landscape architect created the final version.

The garden will feature four quadrants, each with its own theme reflecting an "international and inclusive focus," Intervention Specialist Teacher Stacy Steggert said. The center will feature a 8-foot fountain, with cascading water.

Whitely wanted the design to be student-friendly, allowing students to walk through the area all year round and maintain it.

Principal Michael Griffith hopes that the learning garden "beautifies an underused area, creates an opportunity for educational experiences and allows students to go and sit out there and eat lunch."

He anticipates that it will be seen as part of campus, so students could use it as they would any other outdoor area. He also envisions elementary school students visiting the garden to learn about the regions it represents.

Senior Jonah Weinstein chose the courtyard as his final project in order to become an Eagle Scout. Weinstein built a storage bench and small greenhouses, called coldframes, for the new courtyard.

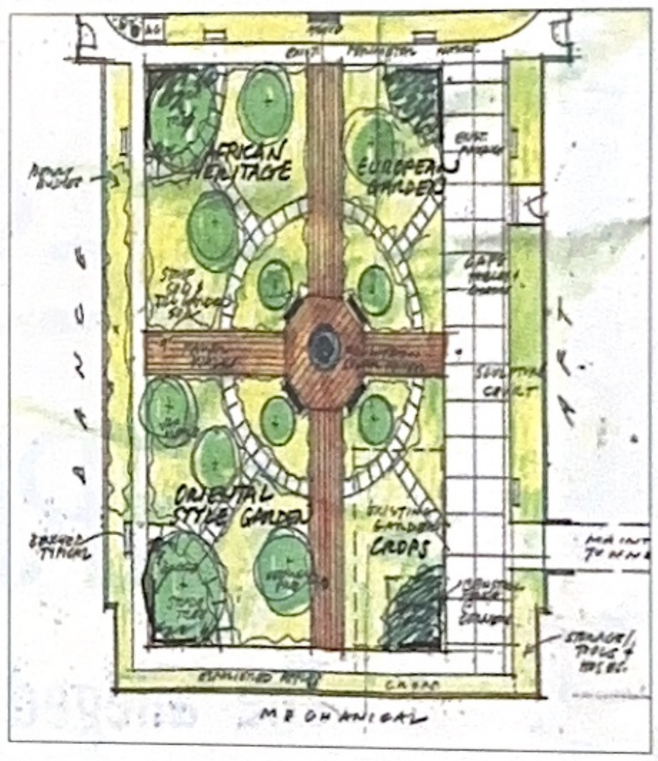
Sophomore Lauren Jensen is among those who miss the grass, which was removed to start the project. "I look out into the courtyard in math class, and it's really upsetting that it's not there," Jensen said.

The money for the new courtyard comes from six sources. The bulk of the cost belongs to the district, which paid $14,500 for the preparation of the ground for further construction. The project received a grant of $1,000 from the True Hero foundation, an organization that gives grants to causes that earn the most votes on its website. The rest of the money came from school clubs, private funds and the Parent Teacher Organization.

Griffith does not anticipate any inappropriate student actions in the garden area or fountain. "That's always a concern, but I've always believed that when we've given our students nice things, they have not misused them," Griffith said.

For $40, students will soon be able to purchase personalized bricks that will pave the garden's walkways, Steggert explained in an email interview. The option will be open to the senior class before the end of the school year.

LIZ JACOBI/THE SHAKERITE



This April 17 photo depicts the progress of the construction of the new courtyard. To the left is a drawing that shows the plan for the courtyard fountain and garden. The Learning Garden is split into four quadrants. Three of the four areas will represent African, Asian and European cultures. The southwest quadrant will host a new version of the crop garden created by the Green Club and Garden Club in 2010. A fountain is being constructed in the center and was donated by the Levert family in honor of deceased Shaker graduate and R&B singer, Gerald Levert ('84).

By the Numbers//Funding the Fountain

Shaker School District	Private funds	Student activity funds	Private funds	True Hero Foundation	High school PTO
$14,500	$8,000	$3,000	$1,000	$1,000	$350
• Sod removal, improvement and preparation of soil for planting	• Raised through A Night for the Red & White for general support	• Planting	• Raised by friends and family of Gerald Levert for the fountain	• General support	• General support

DATA//PEGGY CALDWELL
GRAPHIC//GRAHAM FINE

Armed Invaders Assault, Rob Party Guests

ALLIE HARRIS CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

A group of males, some armed with handguns, forced their way into a house party on Strathavon Road and later assaulted two students who fled March 23.

Senior Matt Reesing, who attended the party, described it as a typical Shaker party. Reesing saw several males beginning to push their way through the front door as the host and other attendees unsuccessfully tried to push them back.

Reesing said he was the first to be punched. The next thing he remembers is being outside of the house. "I felt shocked. You always think it happens to someone else," he said.

Ressing called his mom, Sherri Reesing, right after it happened. His mom described him as "a little confused".

"My first reaction was confusion. I didn't know exactly what happened," his mom said. "At first I thought he had probably gotten into a fight, but when he came home, he explained to me what had happened."

Reesing's mom was "shocked and angry that this could happen at a high school party in Shaker."

Junior Rodney McFall was at the party for less than an hour before the males showed up. According to McFall, after Reesing was hit, everyone started running. McFall lost track of his friends and went back in to the house hoping to find them. He heard someone shout "gun" and "police," then ran out of the house.

"I felt pretty scared," he said. "I could have gotten arrested. I could have gotten beat up myself."

Both McFall and Reesing said they did not see guns at the party.

According to the Shaker Heights Police incident report, two students who left the Strathavon party on foot were assaulted by two of the intruders on Riedham Road. The two students told the police they had been "approached by two black males carrying handguns [who] demanded money." One student's wallet and cell phone, a Droid X, were taken.

Both of the assaulted students suffered injuries and neither knew their assailants. To date, no arrests have been made. The assaulted students declined to comment, citing the current investigation.

The assault was classified as an aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon in addition to felonious assault.

Reesing found out about the other assaults two days later. He and his mother discussed the importance of being careful and aware of what is going on at parties and large gatherings. She also said that she would not limit her son's social life because of the event.

"I am thankful that nothing worse happened, especially in light of the fact that someone had a gun," Sherri Reesing said. "I feel terrible about what happened to the two boys who were held up at gunpoint. But I am not going to tell Matt that he can't go to a friend's house."

SHERRI REESING

Senior Matt Reesing, pictured March 23 after being assaulted by uninvited males who forced entry to a party on Strathavon Road. He was punched in the nose and proceeded to bleed for approximately two hours. His mother took this picture when he arrived home.

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PLATO'S CLOSET

Lowery Reaches Zimmerman Via Email

ALLIE HARRIS CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

It took a former Shakerite editor to contact the most sought-after man in America.

It seems everyone was talking about George Zimmerman, but no one was talking to him until Ohio University senior Wesley Lowery ('08) exchanged email messages with Trayvon Martin's shooter April 9. Lowery, a former Shakerite editor in chief, is now chief editor of The Post at OU and reporter for Loop 21, a news website focused on African-American issues. After reaching Zimmerman, he appeared on CNN, offering commentary as video of the prison housing Zimmerman rolled.

Zimmerman is charged with second degree murder in the Feb. 26 shooting of Martin in Sanford, Florida. Martin was walking home from a nearby convenience store unarmed. Zimmerman, a self-appointed neighborhood watch leader, was suspicious of Martin and began following him. According to taped phone calls with the police, Zimmerman said Martin looked like he was up to no good. The police dispatcher told Zimmerman not to pursue Martin. Zimmerman later told police Martin attacked him and Zimmerman shot him in self-defense.

Zimmerman had launched a website, therealgeorgezimmerman.com, to raise money for his defense and Lowery started to track the website through registry.com. He found that the website was launched through GoDaddy.com, a popular domain, and located a third-party contact email. "I knew there was a chance [that Zimmerman would respond] so as a journalist, it's my job," Lowery said.

On April 9, Lowery sent an email inquiry to that third party. Within 20 minutes Lowery received a response, and the respondent identified himself as Zimmerman.

Zimmerman responded with, "You are correct, www.therealgeorgezimmerman.com is run by me, George Zimmerman." And later Zimmerman wrote, "Mr. Lowery, You are corresponding with me via Email. Sincerely, George Zimmerman."

"I was shocked that I got a response at all," Lowery said. "It was instinct and curiosity." After a couple exchanges in which he asked for verification of Zimmerman's identity, Lowery furthered his inquiry. "He stopped responding, especially when I started asking substantial questions," Lowery said.

NBC and MSNBC reported that the Zimmerman legal team confirmed the authenticity of the website and that Zimmerman himself was running the site.

After contacting Zimmerman, Lowery wrote a blog post on Loop 21. He received emails and phone calls commending his effort. He appeared on the Jane Velez Mitchell show on Headline News the following day.

Lowery, who has interned at the Wall Street Journal and Columbus Dispatch, said that his success shows the power of young journalists. Said Lowery, "You can be a college student and still get a hold of the most sought-after interview."

YOUTUBE

Former Shakerite chief Wesley Lowery ('08) appeared as a political analyst on CNN the evening of April 11 after reaching Zimmerman.

Applicants Asked for Networking Passwords

JULIA SCHARFSTEIN
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

According to a March 20 Associated Press article, employers are increasingly asking applicants for the passwords to their social media profiles.

A Washington Post opinion article offered an explanation of why employers would request access to applicants' accounts. It stated that employers may want to "see into the more private aspects of would-be employees' lives – you know, the kind of thing you might purposefully hide."

Jamin Raskin, an American University law professor and the director of the university's law and government program, characterized how an applicant might feel if asked to provide passwords to prospective employers. "We're obviously in a completely different world today with social media, but I think most people would see such a request as intrusive, unfair and an invasion of privacy," Raskin said.

American Civil Liberties Union representative Nick Warner explained that the ACLU views employers' request for social media passwords as a violation of privacy. Warner said that such access requests should be handled the same way as searching a home would be -- by requesting a warrant.

Thornton Ice Skating Coordinator Erin Schopf handles some of the hiring for Thornton jobs. Schopf said that looking at an applicant's social media profile is "a little bit of an invasion of privacy. The way you talk to friends isn't the way you behave in front of an employer."

Senior Matt Krantz will be a counselor at the overnight camp Camp Wise this summer. Krantz was not asked for his passwords during his November interview but said he would not have been eager to comply. "I don't have anything to hide . . . but I would have been hesitant," he said.

Krantz does think that employers should be allowed to look at applicants' social network sites. "It's fair for employers to want to see applicants' profiles," he said. Krantz explained a profile can show a lot about a person that employers may want to know.

"On Facebook, what you post becomes public to friends and other people," Krantz said. But, he thinks that there should be a limit; employers should only see what is on an applicant's wall or what is seen to the public.

Senior Nathan Immerman will be a counselor at Anisfield Day Camp this summer. Immerman feels applicants should not have to give up their passwords. "You're never supposed to give a password to anyone else. That's like password making 101," he said. Immerman thinks that employers should be able to tell enough about a person from an interview without looking at their profiles.

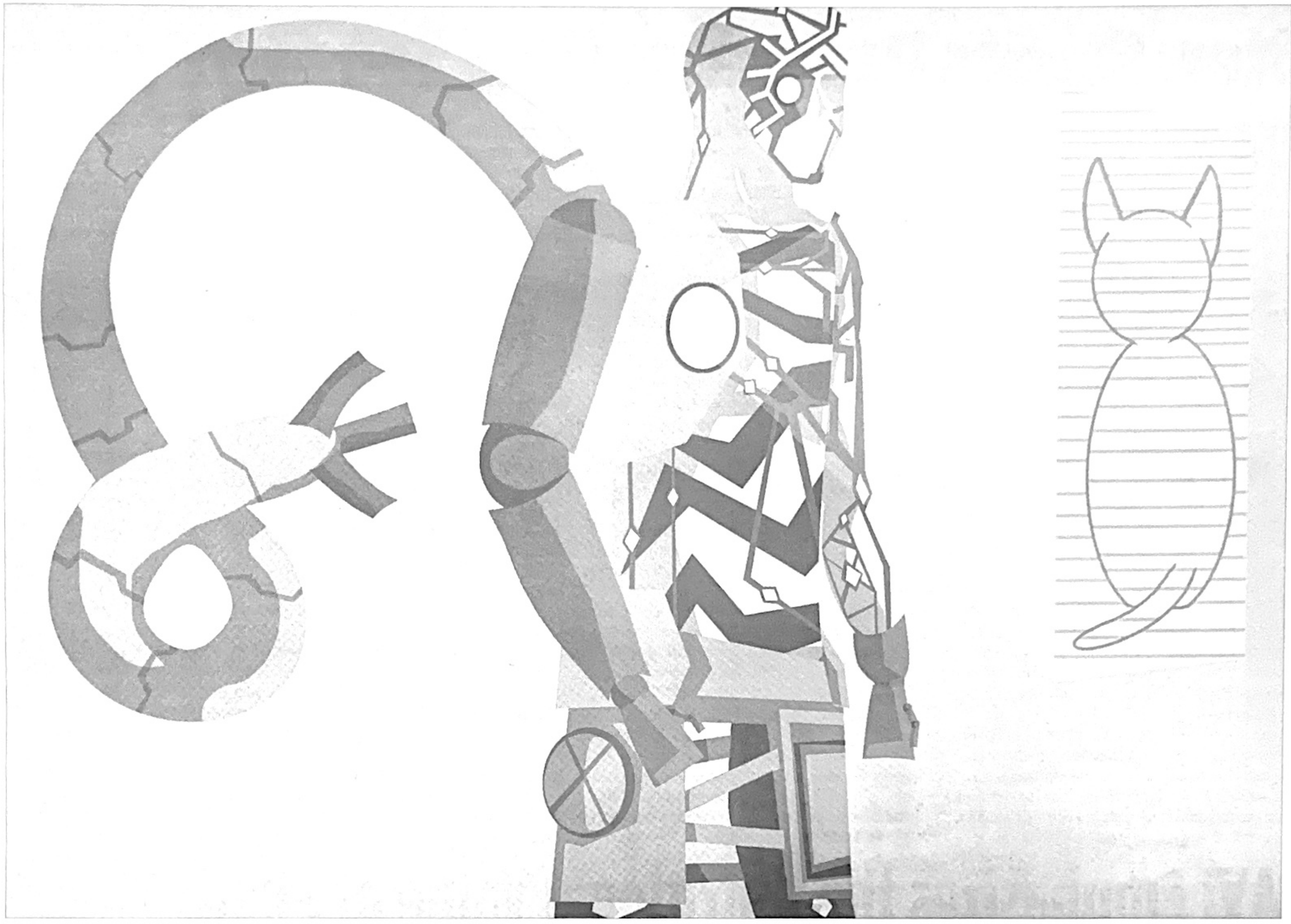
Immerman explained that one's activity online shouldn't affect an employer's decision. "I don't think that [social media] is that necessary in applications. It doesn't matter how you are outside of work as long as you do a good job at work and present yourself well in front of customers," Immerman said.

Maryland has already passed a law that forbids employers from asking applicants or employees for their social media passwords, and other states are working on similar legislation.

Legal Snooping

American University law professon Jamin Raskin, director of the university's Law and Government Program, explained the legality of the issue in an e-mail interview. Raskin said that it is legal for employers to ask applicants for passwords to social network sites unless a state legislates against it. He added, though, that you don't have to comply. "Nothing obligates anyone to give their passwords [to a potential employer] except for the fear that they will be rejected by the employer if they refuse," Raskin said.

COMPILED BY JULIA SCHARFSTEIN



SASHA RAE-GRANT

Vibrating Tattoo Solves Our Energy Crisis

As a kid you probably wanted to be a robot or Buzz Lightyear. Look no further, your childhood dream is one step closer to reality. This technologically advanced nation has come up with your perfect solution. You can now get a tattoo with ferromagnetic ink, which will receive magnetic waves from your cell phone, causing your skin to vibrate every time someone contacts you.

Sarah Shaw

In this day and age communication is super important. Any delay could be a matter of life or more interesting life. It just takes too much time to reach into your pocket, this we know. It's inconveniently located on the bottom half of your body, and your hand is always a good three to four inches away. That's just too far.

Maybe you keep your phone in your sleeve, but even then, it takes effort to pull it out of your sleeve. For those of you who like the way technology works today, your tattoo can come in the shape of a pants pocket.

All that effort spent reaching into your pocket can use up a lot of your energy. We're only human and we have limited expendable energy each day. This invention could bridge the gap between man and machines. That robot that you always dreamed of becoming won't run out of energy. We could have computer screens projected from our eyes and instead of typing, we could just speak our essays and the computer would type them for us. And of course, all of this would be in addition to having a tattoo that vibrates to tell you that your phone is ringing. Soon we won't be humans anymore. We'll be robots. Robots with tattoos.

And that's not all these tattoos can do. Not only will they vibrate when you get a text, but they'll vibrate when people around you get a text, too! Ferromagnetic ink isn't discriminating. Your tattoo will pick up any phone's magnetic waves in the immediate area, and your arm will buzz. Your entire lunch table's arms will buzz when your mom texts you what time she's picking you up.

These are just the things tattoos can do now. You will be able to customize your tattoo tones or vibration patterns for phones calls, text messages, video and picture messages, voicemail, and calendar appointments. According to the Finnish company, Nokia, the tattoo can even tell you when your phone battery is low.

As the bonus with purchase, you will never have to buy another alarm clock. In fact, the vibrating tattoo could do away with the alarm clock industry entirely. For those of you who are super popular, with your phone ringing off the hook, your tattoo will wake you. Your friends will never have to wait more than seconds for a response to the latest text because they will wake you up. With that you won't be able to sleep and, fortunately for you, you will never be late for school again.

OK, now, let's get real.

We all know that technology has taken over our minds, but do we really want it to take over our bodies? Our parents yell at us for checking our phones under the table, but the alternative is having our arms vibrate throughout the meal. This approved patent hasn't come to reality quite yet, but if it does we may have to check our phones if we don't want to look like we are having seizures all the time.

If that's what it takes to be a robot, it may not be all that it's cracked up to be.

New Stages Resonates With Teacher

New Stages is always a highlight on the Shaker calendar. This year was no exception—and it ranks with the best that I've seen. As we've come to expect, the comedy was hilarious. I'm glad that we'll get to see such comedic talents as Dean Carlson, Devon Jordan and Rachel Krause in the coming years.

Carson and Jordan were in Josh Barnett's film noir parody, "Murder in the Worst Degree," which was packed with uproarious surprises.

Christopher Cotton

Allegra Verlezza's "IBF" (Imaginary Best Friend) juxtaposed a delusional bromance with a delightfully nerdy romance. "Blood is Thicker than Ketchup," written by Graham Fine, had a bizarre family in which every member seemed to be either a zany oddball who thought that he was a straight man, or vice versa.

Diamond Miller's "Boujetto" managed to navigate between comedy and serious drama seamlessly. Claire Lawrence's play even had some funny moments, as it explored personal and family conflict, pivoting on a clever ironic twist.

But the play that has really stuck in my mind was "Auf Wieder Sehen," by Barbara Craig. Four characters were waiting for a train. As it slowly became clear for the audience, this was a symbolic vision of life as a wait on the platform for the train, death. But the play had a spirit of wonder and mystery that belied such a simplistic, pessimistic explanation. Jonah Weinstein's sensitive and imaginative directing helped to push the audience further, even after we figured out the allegory.

David Levitz played a painter continuously working at an easel, and he offered to do portraits of members of the audience. He explained: "I'll take a piece of myself and transfix it . . . the shavings of a soul sprinkled onto perceptible material." But the audience slowly came to realize that his canvas was actually a mirror. He was indeed painting his own inner life, not the outside world. Then, in one of those moments that shows the unique power of live theater, he flipped the mirror around to the audience: We were all on that platform, waiting for that train. And this realization raised a question: are we interacting with reality, or with our own perceptions?

In another startling moment, as Naomi Hill cried out heart-renderingly to her beloved sisters, the others suddenly began to wander and hum in an otherworldly but purposeful manner.

I still can't put my finger on why this unusual moment was so powerful, but one reason may be because of its resonance with the ways that the other plays warped the planes of reality. The clearest development of this theme was embodied by Verlezza's imaginary friend, who was visible to only one character but accepted as real by the other: a concise, joyful thesis statement for the evening. In the noir spoof, characters had comical asides, set apart from the other characters and the dramatic action.

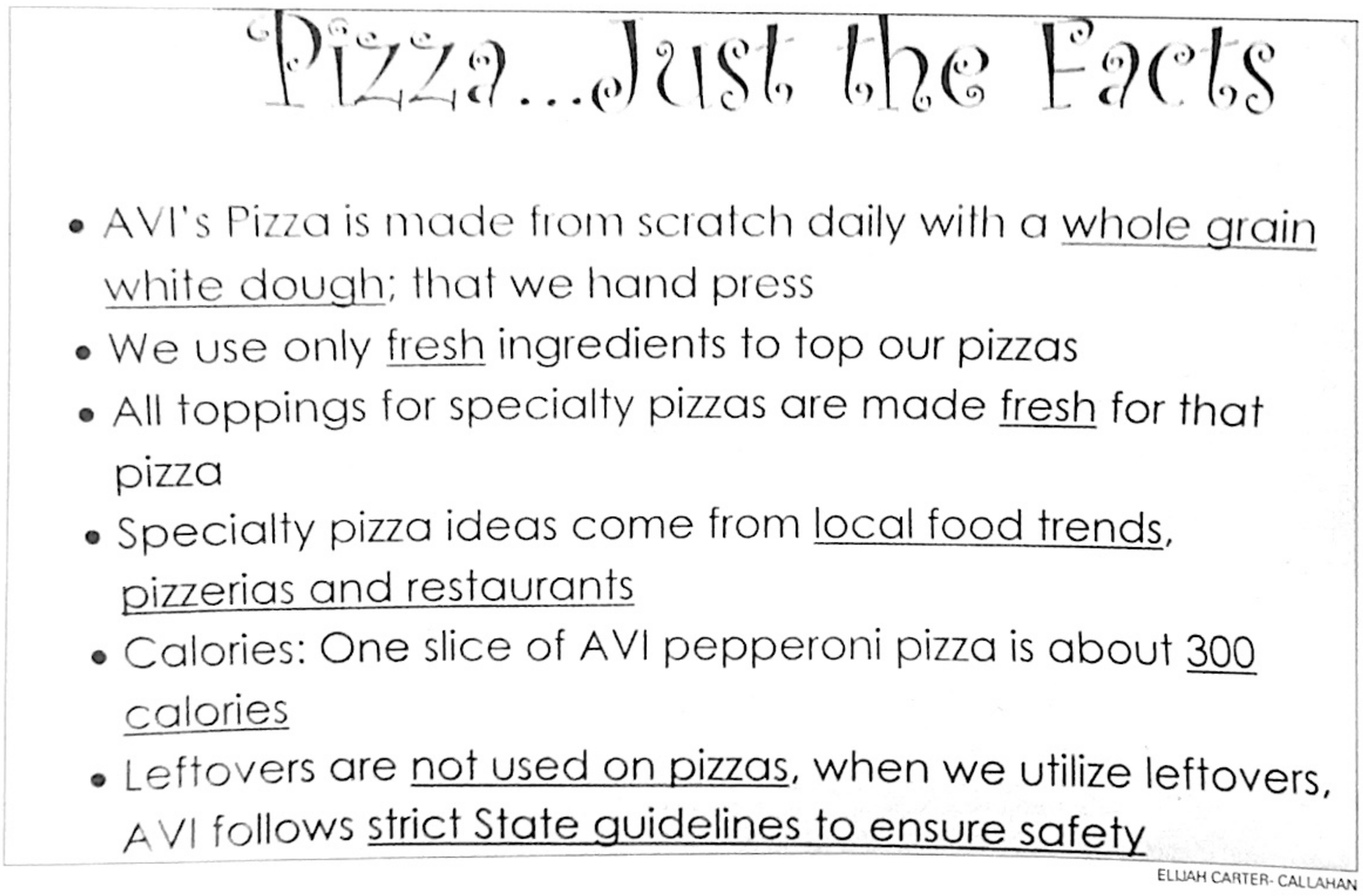
But playwright Barnett subverted these realities, having some characters permeate the increasingly wobbly boundaries. Fine's mind-bending farce also had such boundaries and made them precarious indeed, if it didn't chuck them out the window.

Miller's wonderful "Boujetto" took the same theme, but seriously. A recently-moved Shaker girl, played by Jessica Linear, visits her old neighborhood near Cleveland's Luke Easter Park.

It was a poignant story of someone trying to live in two side-by-side realities, the 'burbs and the 'hood. Linear portrayed a gallant effort to be authentic in two worlds that have conflicting notions of authenticity. Finally, Lawrence's play explored the perennial conflict of the intersecting worlds of adolescents and their parents.

Nights like this make me see what a treat it is to work in this building. There are many realities here: Sometimes they clash, sometimes they race past each other unnoticing, and usually they tolerate each other pretty well. The all-inclusive, all-welcoming, all-questioning spirit of New Stages makes it a wonderful venue for working out these interminglings. I'm looking forward to next year.

AVI Emphasizes the Nutritional Value of Pizza


Pizza...Just the Facts
• AVI's Pizza is made from scratch daily with a whole grain white dough; that we hand press
• We use only fresh ingredients to top our pizzas
• All toppings for specialty pizzas are made fresh for that pizza
• Specialty pizza ideas come from local food trends, pizzerias and restaurants
• Calories: One slice of AVI pepperoni pizza is about 300 calories
• Leftovers are not used on pizzas, when we utilize leftovers, AVI follows strict State guidelines to ensure safety

ELLIAH CARTER- CALLAHAN

This flier was posted at the AVI pizza station in the Upper Cafeteria April 2. The goal of the poster was to clarify information regarding school pizza. According to the AVI website, one slice of pepperoni pizza is 270 calories, and one personal pepperoni pizza is almost 700 calories. The poster also stated that leftover food is not used to top pizzas and refers to state guidelines for leftover use. According to the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, leftover food must be kept below 41 degrees or above 165 degrees. Food must be thrown out after four days.

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NSPA

JACK REESE//THE SHAKERITE

Records Concerning Safety Should Be Public

The killing of Trayvon Martin caused us to wonder whether anything so tragic could happen in Shaker. That would depend, in part, on how many residents have guns. To find out, The Shakerite filed a public records request to determine the number of Shaker Heights residents who have a license to carry a concealed weapon. We feel that it's important for our community to know and understand this number, which would help establish the presence of guns in our surroundings. However, the Cuyahoga County law department denied our request and stated that a sheriff's records of such licenses are "confidential and not 'public records.' "

In Cuyahoga County alone, there were 104 homicides by firearm in 2011, with 30 of the victims under the age of 25. Seven people died in Copley, Ohio Aug. 6 when a man shot his girlfriend's family and his neighbors. Six lives were taken in Akron the week before Christmas, most involving criminal drugs. And in the city of Cleveland, over the course of four months, 30 homicides took place. In 2012 alone, the shooting at Chardon High School was more than enough to shake up this community and every community in the nation. Then, last week, a Lakewood High School student was shot and killed as he returned to a party.

Rite Idea

According to the Children's Defense Fund, 5,740 children and teenagers were killed by gunfire in 2008 and 2009. In 2007, one child or teen was killed by gunfire every three hours, eight every day, 58 every week. We acknowledge that some deaths by gunfire are caused by illegally owned weapons, but in cases like Trayvon's, the gun was legally concealed. Studies also show that gunshot wounds are the leading cause of death for 10- to 19 year olds, besides motor vehicle accidents. Although the list of licensed drivers in Ohio is also confidential, we are easily aware of who is driving the car next to us on the road. What we remain ignorant of is if the driver next to us has a concealed weapon in the glove compartment.

Although they are the two leading causes of teen deaths, you can hardly compare the two. A gun is easily hidden, but your face is clearly seen behind the wheel. The purpose of having a driver's license is to legally transport yourself from place to place. The purpose of having a gun can be considered much more threatening. Whether for hunting or self defense, the essential reason for owning a gun is in case you ever have to use it. As members of a community, we have the right to know how many of these potentially harmful weapons reside legally in our city.

According to Ohio law, only journalists may view – not copy or reproduce – records of conceal and carry permits. The Shakerite was originally not allowed to view the records because the law department considered it a student exercise, not a newspaper. However, we issued a rebuttal, citing the Hazelwood Supreme Court Case which established that the role of a public forum newspaper is to inform the general public. We were then granted access to view the confidential list – which does not include addresses -- as journalists. But journalists are not the only ones who should have the right to view this information.

Maintaining this information for public access is a safety precaution. We do not support the idea of publicly displaying names and addresses of gun owners in our area. However, in the interest of safety, the number of gun licenses in our community should be accessible.

Unfortunately, there is no satisfactory ending to this situation. Most likely, the law will not be changed, the information will remain inaccessible and residents will continue to hold concealed weapons, for any reason. So our best advice is to stay alert and aware, because as Cuyahoga County – and Ohio -- continue to withhold this information from residents, we have no better option.

Struggling for Answers, Safety and Justice

The shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin has left many questioning the motivation behind his killer's actions, the law enforcement system and what can be done to bring the case to a close.

ALYSSE EBERHARD, MARISSA MILLER AND RACHEL SHAW COVER STORY EDITORS

News of the killing of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin spread across the nation, causing many to call for changes to gun control laws, the arrest of George Zimmerman and, ultimately, "Justice for Trayvon."

Zimmerman shot and killed Martin Feb. 26. Martin was walking home from a nearby convenience store in Sanford, Florida. He was walking with his hood up, $22 in his wallet, a bottle of iced tea and Skittles.

Zimmerman, a member of the neighborhood watch, became suspicious of Martin and followed him in his car. What happened next has yet to be determined. Florida police released a recorded phone call from Zimmerman in which he told the police dispatcher that Martin "looks like he's up to no good, or he's on drugs or something." Zimmerman followed Martin despite the dispatcher's instructions not to. The two allegedly engaged in a physical altercation that ended with Zimmerman firing a shot into Martin's chest, followed by Martin saying "You got me."

Police did not arrest Zimmerman, citing Florida's now infamous Stand Your Ground law. Zimmerman asserts that Martin attacked him and he acted in self defense. A federal investigation was initiated, the Sanford police chief resigned, and Zimmerman was charged with second-degree murder April 11. He turned himself in shortly after.

The incident resonates among Shaker students.

Senior Anna Suresh said, "I was shocked and surprised a seemingly innocent teenager was shot and killed on the sole basis of race and the suspicions of Zimmerman involving the stereotypes of an African-American teenage boy."

Zimmerman had a license to carry a concealed weapon. In the two months before killing Martin, he called the Sanford police 46 times while on neighborhood watch. The police have been heavily criticized for failing to treat Zimmerman as a suspect after the shooting.

Junior Anthony Spencer expressed confidence in the Shaker police. "This could happen in Shaker," Spencer said, "but the police would handle it better."

Although the Shaker city website lists neighborhood association presidents, no formal neighborhood watch operates. Sophomore Drew Puskar said residents should notify police of suspicious situations and leave it at that. "People shouldn't take matters into their own hands," he said.

Senior Emily Hirsch recognizes the role of neighborhood watches but people should not rely on them. "Houses have been broken into," she said. "There's a reason for [neighborhood watches] if police aren't responding, but also people should lock their doors and have security systems."

Protests such as the Million Hoodie March held in Manhattan's Union Square March 21, have focused on racial concerns. Some claim that were the roles reversed, Martin would have been arrested immediately because of his race. Others, such as Fox News personality Geraldo Rivera, charge that minority youth wearing hooded sweatshirts fulfill a criminal stereotype. Rivera said African-American and Latino parents should not let their sons wear hoodies.

Martin was wearing a hoodie when he was killed, and the article of clothing quickly became a symbol of support for Martin and his family. LeBron James tweeted a picture of the Miami Heat basketball team wearing hooded sweatshirts and bowing their heads in support of Martin.

Junior Tia Morrison stated, "It's a little shocking just because things like this go unnoticed every day, but I guess it goes to show what the power of protest can do in this country."

Some say that Martin having his hood up made him look suspicious, which prompted Zimmerman to follow him.

"I thought this was another example of stupidity and racism in America," said Puskar. "It's people doing stupid things just because they don't think. They're not assessing the situation or looking at all the facts, but judging the situation based on emotions."

"There can always be an incident like this anywhere throughout the nation as long as racial prejudices remain in the society," Suresh said. "However, I believe people in Shaker are more aware and open-minded about race as an existing issue in society."

Contrarily, senior Jiawei He emphasized the differences between Shaker and Sanford, Florida. "We're not a gated community and we are a lot more diverse, so I doubt someone would overreact like that when they see an African-American person in a hoodie," he said. "[This incident] is not racial. It's more reflective of socioeconomic class difference between gated communities and the outside world."

However, Sanford's racial breakdown is similar to Shaker's: Sanford is roughly 62 percent Caucasian, 26 percent African American, and 14 percent Latino. Zimmerman classifies himself as Latino. Shaker is about 55 percent Caucasian, 37 percent African American, and 1.5 percent Latino. Although the gated community mentality is a factor, Sanford is middle class, with a mean income of about $62,200 (comparatively, the mean income in Shaker is $126,100).

Junior Teja Kasturi (pictured to the right) feels that race was a significant factor in the attention paid to Martin's death. "I think that this has garnered a lot of attention simply because of the whole issue of race," he stated. "Homicides occur on an almost daily basis in this country, yet none in the past few months have gained so much attention."

This highlights the importance of media attention in directing public opinion. "Media [can be used] to bring people to justice, but it also seems kind of dangerous because there could be a huge media frenzy," Hirsch said.

If convicted, Zimmerman could be sentenced to life in prison. Prior to the charge, Zimmerman's lawyers announced that they no longer represent him, claiming that he frequently ignored their legal advice and that they lost contact with him. Zimmerman plans to plead not guilty to the charge.

Rumors Fly After the Trayvon Shooting

What exactly happened the night Trayvon Martin was shot by neighborhood watch leader George Zimmerman has yet to be determined, but rumors have spread regarding possible circumstances. From attacks to physical injuries to the source of audible screams during 911 calls, claims have been made swaying opinion in both directions. The following are two that have captured significant attention.

Zimmerman and Martin's Physical Altercation

Zimmerman told investigators that Martin attacked him, allegedly jumping him, breaking his nose and slamming his head into the sidewalk. However, the funeral director who handled Martin's body said there were no signs of a fight on the teen's body. Richard Kurtz said he prepared the body for internment and saw no marks other than the gunshot wound.

In a video of George Zimmerman at the Sanford Police Department the night Martin was killed that was released at the end of March, Zimmerman appeared to show no signs of confrontation or injury. ABC news later enhanced the video to show that Zimmerman had gashes on the back of his head.

Screams Recorded on a 911 Call

Before Martin was killed on Feb. 26, a 911 call recorded the sounds of someone screaming for help. Zimmerman's brother, Robert, swears that the screams came from Zimmerman. But when Martin's mother Sybrina Fulton listened to the calls, she burst into tears when she heard the screams. According to Natalie Jackson, founder of the Women's Trial Group, which specializes in cases for women and children, Fulton said, "That's Trayvon, that's our son."

Voice expert Tom Owen used voice identification software to analyze the recordings, and his findings ruled out the possibility of the cries belonging to Zimmerman.

Owen put all of the screams together, cutting out everything else. The software then compared that audio to Zimmerman's voice, which ended up being a forty eight percent match. Owen told the Orlando Sentinel that in order to reach a positive match with audio of this quality, he would expect higher than a ninety percent match.

While Owen asserts that the screams do not belong to Zimmerman, he cannot confirm that the screams belonged to Martin because he did not have a sample of the teen's voice to compare the recordings to.

In media coverage, pictures of Zimmerman and Martin most frequently appear in pairs – Zimmerman at the Orange County Jail, and Martin smiling happily at 13 years old. This contrasts with a second pair of pictures, in which Zimmerman is shown as a professional, wearing a suit and smiling, and Martin is withdrawn in a hoodie. The choice of photos implies a bias towards either Martin or Zimmerman. In both sets above, the picture to the left is Zimmerman, and the pictures to the right is Martin.

Ohio Concealed Carry Laws and Procedures

The Ohio concealed carry law recognizes the "inalienable and fundamental right of an individual to defend the individual's person and the members of the individual's family." Concealed carry permits are issued by county sheriffs, and one of the requirements to obtain a concealed carry permit is 12 hours of education. This includes 10 hours of gun safety, handling and storage instruction, two hours of training on a firing range and a written exam.

According to the concealed carry law, this necessitates "a physical demonstration of competence in the use of a handgun and in the safe handling and storage of a handgun and a physical demonstration of the attitude necessary to shoot a handgun in a safe manner." However, competence remains a vague term. Furthermore, there are not specific criteria for passing the written exam, and the educational course has only minimal content requirements.

In 2005, the Cleveland Plain Dealer published lists of everyone within the five counties surrounding Cleveland who had a concealed carry permit. Steve Austria, state senator at the time, declared this to be an abuse of media access privilege. He said that publishing these names would threaten the safety of the permit holders. Ohioans for Concealed Carry responded by publishing Plain Dealer Editor' Doug Clifton's home address and phone number.

The Ohioans for Concealed Carry Website states, "We are about freedom. We are an advocate for all firearms related rights." OFCC was founded in 1999 to promote legalizing concealed carry in Ohio. After concealed carry was legalized in 2004, their mission became to expand and preserve the rights of gun owners.

Although they belong to the group of people least likely to be assaulted, senior citizens as a group, have a growing number of concealed carry permits. Jeff Garvis, president of OFCC, recommends that senior citizens carry weapons because they could be seen as easy victims. A June 19, 2007 Plain Dealer article stated that about 12 percent of concealed-carry licenses issued by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office belong to citizens 60 years or older.

A man who carries a gun at all times was granted anonymity in the article because his car was vandalized and his tires were slashed when he published his opinions on gun rights.

To read more about the process of obtaining this information, see www.shakerite.com.

LIZ JACOB//THE SHAKERITE

This meeting of the Gay Straight Alliance April 17 is led by co-presidents Asia Mapp and Didi Shiloh. This organization focuses on discussing and combating intolerance towards the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Mapp and Shiloh lead the group every Tuesday in Room 231 and participate in events such as the Day of Silence. Shiloh said that the group is also a support group and says that GSA is open to all students. Members of the group have begun to meet with SGORR members in an effort to forge a collaborative effort around GLBT issues.

GSA and SGORR Come Together to Combat Homophobia in Shaker

ERICA SEMAN SPOTLIGHT EDITOR

With the addition of more students committed to diversity, the Day of Silence is growing louder.

While Shaker's Gay Straight Alliance has provided support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community since 1998, the Student Group on Race Relations is now also working to increase awareness on the LGBT front.

Each year the GSA hopes to increase participation in the annual Day of Silence, a student-led, national event that brings attention to anti-LGBT behavior within schools. The silence of the participants symbolically represents that of the LGBT community.

Junior Didi Shiloh, co-president of GSA and SGORR group leader, hoped SGORR members would choose to participate in the Day of Silence. "If GSA can reach out to others through Day of Silence with 300 kids, just think of how powerful that is," she said. "I want to give SGORR the benefit of the doubt and assume that they will participate."

The GSA's recent joint meeting with SGORR members helped bring 38 diverse participants to the event.

In the last year, several incidents of suicide by teenagers and young adults who experienced anti-LGBT bullying have drawn national attention. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center concluded from various studies that between 30 and 40 percent of LGBT teenagers have attempted suicide. The Day of Silence tries to also call to attention the effects of this silencing.

"If GSA can reach out to others through Day of Silence with 300 kids, just think of how powerful that is."

DIDI SHILOH

To try and combat this, during the past two years, SGORR has focused heavily on bullying and "fostering discussion of diversity with elementary students," SGORR adviser Halle Bauer said.

Senior Asia Mapp, the other co-president of GSA and SGORR member, wants SGORR members to continue to reach their objectives. "I feel SGORR does a lot of what it is trying to do but it's not at its full potential," said Mapp, "I want to see it continue to go further."

In general, Shiloh said that she believes SGORR has a wider basis than many others realize. "SGORR doesn't just stand for race relations; it stands for all diversity," she said, adding that she hopes members can accept a broad variety of people.

Bauer said she also hopes SGORR members would participate in The Day of Silence. In terms of race and sexuality, "The struggles for equality are deeply, deeply connected," she said.

Mapp supports further collaboration of the organizations.

The two organizations have not forged a formal relationship, but leaders of both groups have been meeting to do so. "There's no firm partnership yet, but I know that they're in the works," Bauer said.

The push for more of a connection between the two groups comes not only from common members, issues and a drive for awareness and acceptance, but also from elementary and middle school teachers.

"Teachers asked us to touch on it. Middle school teachers showed interest in LGBT topics and talked to SGORR," said Shiloh. "They don't want us to open the whole world of sexuality, just to say that it's OK to be different."

Mapp also feels that these lessons on diversity and tolerance should continue in the younger schools. "Kids at that age need to be aware of the effect their actions can have, just as much as high school students do," she said.

Recently, Shiloh created a PowerPoint presentation for Core members and to help other high school students as well.

Shiloh said that she started this project after encountering intolerant comments during class. "I've noticed some people display a level of detrimental ignorance day to day, which is shameful," she said concerning current-event issues including LGBT acceptance. Shiloh added that the purpose of her presentation is to help students avoid making judgments based on stereotypes and instead form educated personal opinions.

Shiloh also said that she holds others accountable for expanding the reach of LGBT awareness. "Shaker is a very liberal area, so we should have a much wider basis," she said. "A lot of people say, 'Oh, yeah, I'm cool with gay people,' but don't do anything. I think it's your responsibility to speak out about LGBT issues."

Bauer Returns to SGORR as adviser

Halle Bauer's interest in race relations brought her back to her Shaker roots.

Bauer ('06) graduated from Northwestern in 2010 now works as the SGORR adviser. Bauer noted that she "was really involved in SGORR as a SGORR leader." Throughout college, Bauer remained in close contact with Marcia Jaffe, the founding SGORR adviser who retired last year. At Northwestern, Bauer worked with a group of students to help implement a Latino Studies program. She said in the end, the efforts were helpful. "It was a really powerful event in terms of making a change in the world." Now, Bauer teaches IB Anthropology, which she said relates to her interest in race. She also hopes SGORR will "have a wider reach to those who aren't directly involved but are enthusiastic."

COMPILED BY ERICA SEMAN

Shaker Heights Teachers' Association

SHTA

Professionals Dedicated To Educating Shaker's Youth

Merlot Returns to Cleveland, Band in Tow

ALEX RICH STAFF REPORTER

Attention fans of music and mustaches: you may want to pay attention to Gentlemen Hall, a new band whose name comes from an old mustache grooming parlor in Kansas, which, according to lead singer and '02 Shaker graduate Gavin Merlot, is "back again in the form of rock and roll."

The first thing to note about Gentlemen Hall is their interesting sound. All six members play different instruments. They say the variety "keeps the sound fun and keeps our attention (we are all ADD)."

As they have made their way in the music world they have been compared to the Flaming Lips and David Bowie. For those who aren't familiar with '80s musicians, they are also similar to Foster the People, MGMT and Passion Pit. Merlot, however, thinks analogies are hard to make. "It's been tough for people to make comparisons because we kind of sit on our own," he said.

The distinctive sextet features two Cleveland members, Merlot and Rory Given (bass); the remaining four, Jacob Michael (vocals and guitar), Bradford Alderman (vocal synthesizers), Phil Boucher (drums), and Seth Hachen (flute) met Merlot and Given at Berklee College of Music in Boston. Though it's difficult to imagine a band that includes a flute player making it into the mainstream, they are now gaining the attention of everyone from MTV to regular music fans across the country.

"Being in a band is a crazy journey that none of us could've predicted. It's a blast"

GAVIN MERLOT

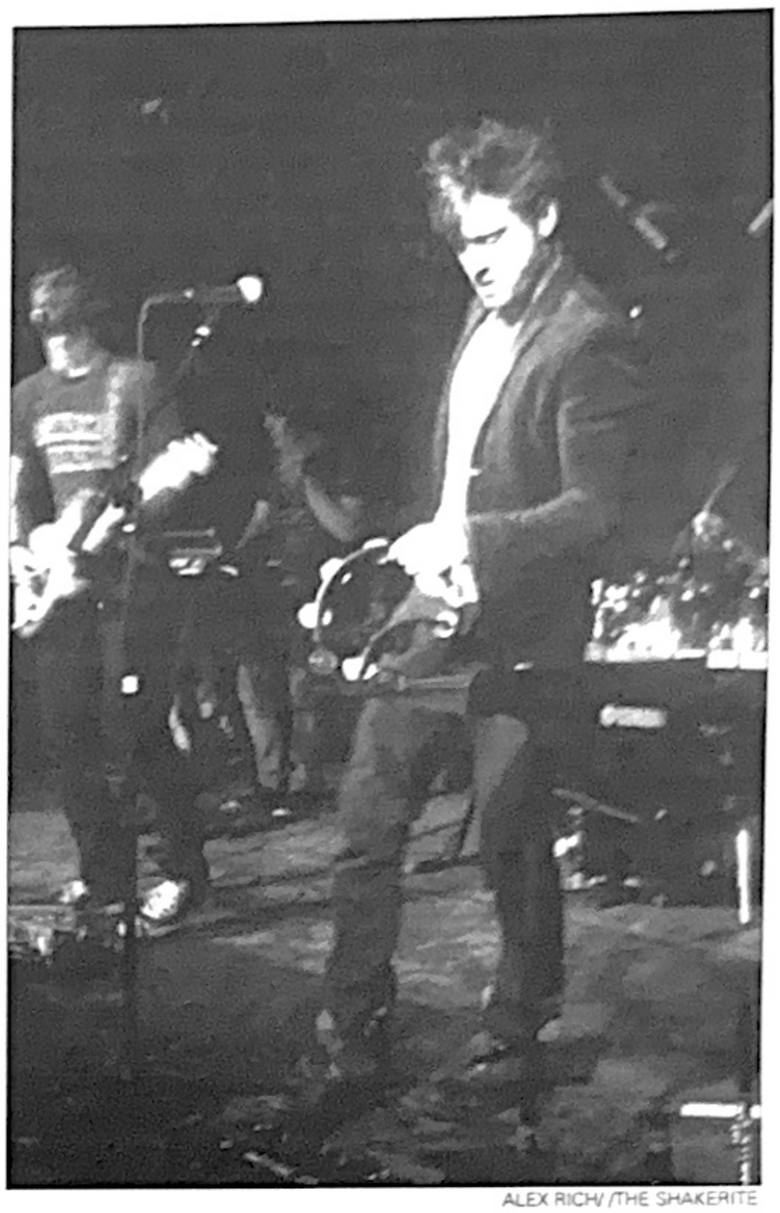
To explain their recent success, the band has said, "it's hard to pin one thing. Today it really takes 100 'breaks' to make an artist. We were lucky enough to land a spot on the Billboard Music Awards. That definitely helped. But it really comes down to hard work. Touring, touring, touring." They have kept true to that mantra and have just started touring again, playing the Grog Shop in Cleveland Heights on April 11.

Potential listeners may get their first clue Gentlemen Hall's uniqueness from their name, but at their Grog Shop show their individuality truly shone. Playing an almost nonstop 45-minute set, the band bounced around to basic guitar riffs accompanied by flute melodies, commanding vocals and complex synths in the background. It was hard not to smile at the band's excitement, but a truly special moment happened as they played their new single, "All Our Love."

Partway through the song the audience started waving their arms in time to the sweeping chorus. The band members who could gathered in the front, slung their arms over one another's shoulders, and sang along while grinning widely. There was a feeling of unity within the audience and such a strong connection to the band that it was hard to imagine it would be possible with other musicians.

Later that night, as they mingled with the audience, the subject of their fans kept returning to conversation. After garnering compliments for his flute playing, Hachen said, "The reason we do this is for our fans. We're traveling to make relationships with people." Merlot added, "A lot of the best stuff happens off stage. We get to explore the world and meet fun new party people every night! Being in a band is a crazy journey that none of us could've predicted. It's a blast."

It's a blast for us listeners, too.



ALEX RICH/ /THE SHAKERITE

Gentlemen Hall (pictured are Gavin Merlot, Jacob Michael, Bradford Alderman and Phil Boucher) played a show at the Grog Shop on April 11 in support of their album "When We All Disappear." Their new single, "All Our Love," debuts on radio stations this month.

THE HUFFINGTON POST

This features two of the items in question in the suit of Gucci versus Guess. The top picture is a shoe by Gucci and the image below it portrays the Guess shoe. Both display interlocking G's and red stripe down the center.

Guess It May Be Plagiarism, Fashion Style

ELANA ROSS STAFF REPORTER

Plagiarism isn't limited to research papers, it seems.

Students know that an F awaits them if they don't give credit to people whose ideas they use.

Apparently, some members of the fashion industry were absent the day their teachers explained plagiarism, and now they need lawyers.

Plagiarism in the fashion industry is not a new idea. When fashion shows originated at the turn of the last century, employees of lower-end stores attended, took notes, and then proceeded to reproduce those items. The practice continues today -- did anyone notice that replicas of Catherine Middleton's wedding dress popped up less than a month after the royal wedding?

In the latest fight over fashion copying, Gucci filed a suit against Guess in 2009, and the trial finally began March 28. The items in question are shoes, both showcasing a design of interlocking Gs. Gucci claims Guess copied the shoe design and wants compensation of $200 million in losses and $124 million in damages.

According to Bloomberg News, Louis Ederer, Gucci's lawyer, told the judge, "It's about a massive, complicated scheme to knock off Gucci's best known and iconic designs."

Similarities between the companies' shoes are undeniable, but is Guess to blame?

Elizabeth Plautz, AP Economics teacher doesn't see it that way. "This isn't [Guess] passing itself off as another company," she explained.

"They're giving the market what they want."

Although some overlap between designs is inevitable, this case concerns the corporate version of plagiarism -- intellectual property, the premise that a person or company can own an idea.

It is difficult to tell where the origins of an idea lie. Don't great minds think alike? But if they do, is it possible to sue for great minds thinking alike?

As any student who has read a dozen articles for a research paper knows, sometimes it's hard to tell where someone else's idea ends and your own begins.

Tattoo Idea Vibrates Through Tech World

Nokia patents an idea that could bring humans one step closer to becoming cyborgs

Ezra Zigmond

"It's amazing that new technology allows people to be so connected with each other, but when texting and social networking start taking up the majority of our time, one really has to wonder how meaningful any of those connections are."

EZRA ZIGMOND

SARAH-JANE LORENZO SPOTLIGHT EDITOR

What if you never had to miss another phone call or text message?

Nokia has patented an idea for tattoos that could link humans to their cell phones by vibrating each time the phone receives a text message, call or reaches low battery. The tattoos and phones would be linked by a magnetic field, which would be responsible for the micro vibrations of the tattoo's ferromagnetic ink. If users wanted a faster way to recognize callers, they could assign different vibrations to different contacts in the same way that they can assign different ringtones on their cell phones.

"It seems like this would just further the already growing problem of people substituting texting for actually interacting with people," said sophomore Ezra Zigmond, who said that he would not get a vibrating tattoo if given the option. "While it is certainly an interesting idea, and anyone who wants such a tattoo is entitled to get one, if a time comes when people think it's so important that they know exactly when they get a text . . . that really is a bad sign."

Junior Josh Schultheiss said although Nokia's idea is getting a lot of notice by media and technology lovers, he doesn't think it will go too far. "I think that acquisition of a vibrating tattoo patent is merely so Nokia can have options in the future," he said.

However, if the idea gets off of the ground it will have some support. "Half of the time my phone rings I don't hear it, I don't feel it," said senior Daniel Jones. Jones said that he would definitely consider getting one of Nokia's tattoos, his only reservation being that he "would still want it to look cool."

Senior Jalen Willis said that he would also be interested in a vibrating tattoo. "I just think it's cool," he said. "I do random things. I don't know, I'd be a part of history if I did that. Just leaving a mark."

For those who like the tattoo idea but don't actually want to get ferromagnetically inked, Nokia has also patented a more temporary alternative: vibrating stickers.

Want to go High-Tech But Escape all of the Buzz?

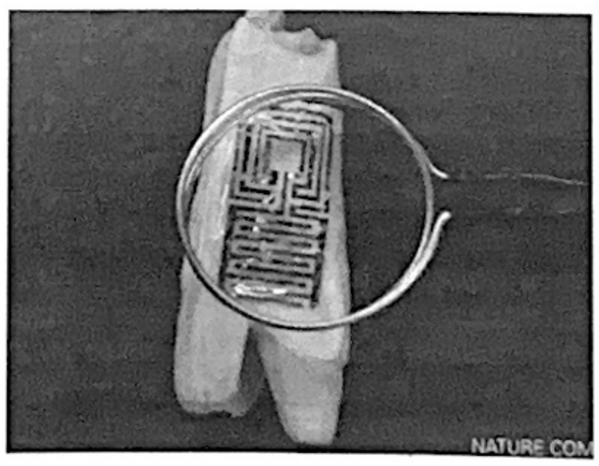
Companies around the world are working on products that just might be what you're looking for. Here are a few of their ideas:

Add Some Ears

Neurowear, a fashion electronics company in Japan, is easing brain-wave detecting cat ears onto the market this month. The ears move depending upon the user's emotion, stiffening when they detect concentration, bending down when the user is relaxed, and wiggling when the user is amused. Although Neurowear has yet to plan a release date for the ears in the US, they will be sold in Japan at a retail price of $110. The product's website, necomimi.com, uses the slogan "Forget wearing your heart on your sleeve, now you can wear it on your head!"

Tattoo Your Teeth

Tooth tattoos are nothing new. For years, "tattooth" artists have teamed up with dentists around the world to make it possible for you to display a mouthful of anything from Disney characters to historical figures. Now, Michael McAlpine, an assistant professor at Princeton, has developed a type of tooth tattoo capable of tracking dental health. These tattoos are made from graphene, and use antimicrobial peptides and resonant coil to identify bacteria. A radio frequency identification tag is incorporated into the tattoos in order to link them to exterior monitoring equipment.

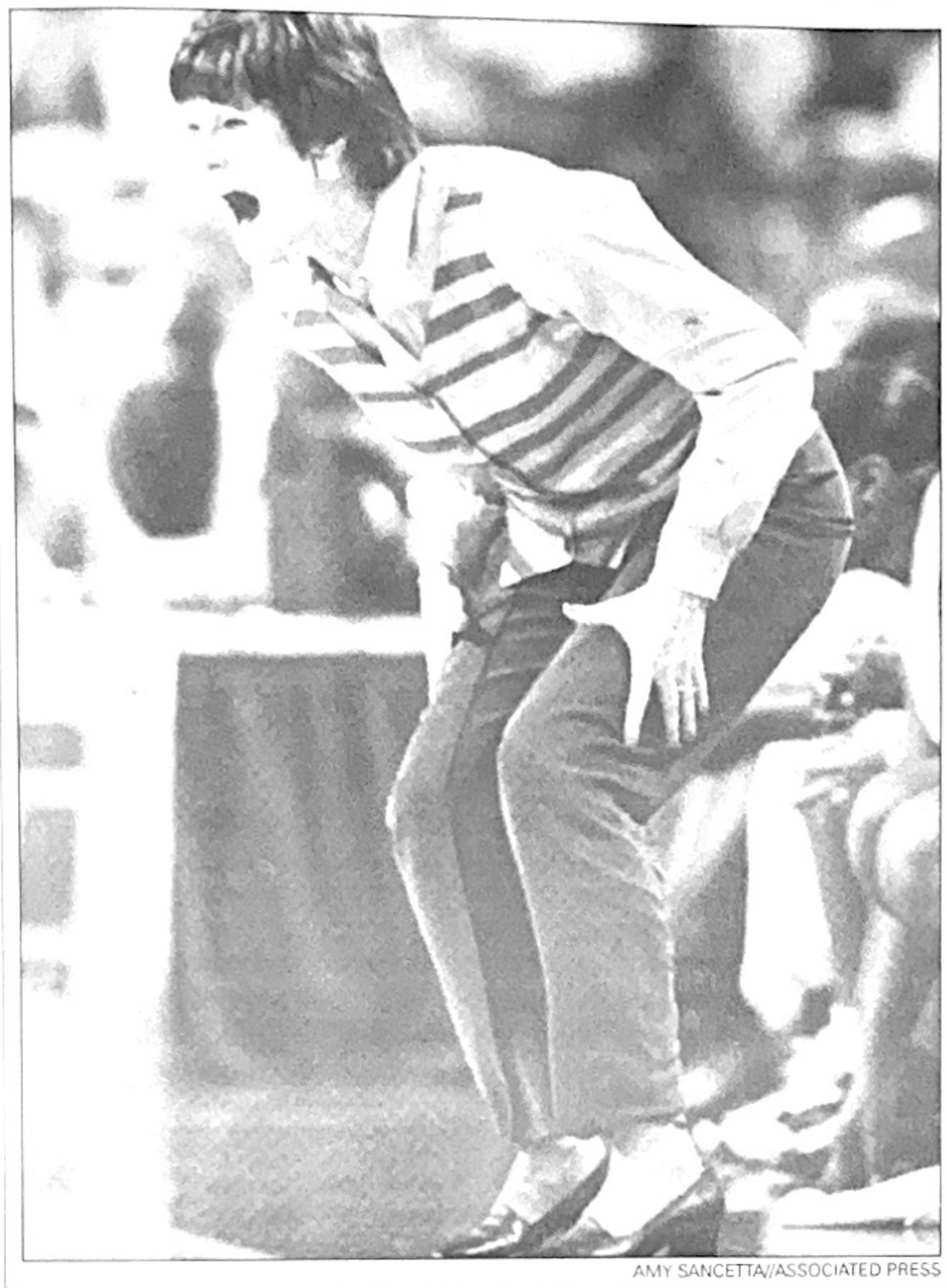


Grab a Pair of Glasses

Early this month Google began testing its new augmented reality glasses, introducing the world to a new type of wearable computing device. The glasses allow their user to take pictures, send texts, make phone calls, browse the Internet and play music without ever having to click a mouse or touch a screen. All functions of the glasses are controlled by a vocal recognition and head movement. The glasses have evoked mixed responses from critics across the Internet, but many have wondered: what happens when you're crossing the street and encounter a pop-up ad?

Pat Summitt Retires After 38 Years

Quick Hits



AMY SANCETTA/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Steps down 8 months after early onset of Alzheimer's

Pat Summitt stepped down as University of Tennessee head women's basketball coach April 19, eight months after she announced that she had been diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's. After 38 years at Tennessee, she holds the all-time win record in college basketball for either gender, with 1,098; she also won eight national championships. She led Tennessee to 18 Final Four appearances and coached the 1984 Olympic team to a gold medal.

She was the 2011 Sports Illustrated Sportswoman of the Year. Holly Warlick, Summitt's assistant for 27 years, will take over as head coach. Many people tweeted or issued statements about Summitt's retirement, including her former players, Tennessee alumni and other coaches.

Donte Stallworth, a 2002 Tennessee graduate who now plays for the New England Patriots, tweeted about Summitt's intimidating persona: "I'll never forget my sophomore year, @patsummitt gave our pre-game speech before playing rival Florida . . . She had me too hype!! #LEGEND" Senior Jordan Allen said, "It's very depressing to know the NCAA is losing such a great coach. What she is going through is a very sad thing to hear, but it's a good decision. She will never be forgotten for her accomplishments and she has had a very successful career."

Summitt's signature loud, fiery attitude on the sideline calmed with her declining health. A Sports Illustrated article said, "The progress of Summitt's disease was undeniable. By December – just four months after her public declaration – when her team came to visit Stanford, she was holding onto the press table to steady herself. The dragon lady sideline persona was missing."

In first week of training, men's crew steers into trouble on the Cuyahoga River

The newly-formed men's crew team began their first season with a bang. Literally. During a regatta March 29, one of the boats hit an unknown object in the Cuyahoga River.

"The Cuyahoga has a lot of stuff floating in it. The kid who was steering the boat didn't see the object we hit, and neither did our coach," junior Teja Kasturi said.

"I wasn't in the boat at the time, but I heard that the conditions were poor and the river was choppy. There were a lot of uncontrollable factors. It was the first week we were on the water, too, so we were relatively inexperienced. The boat didn't tip over, though."

Originally, men's crew wasn't very popular, but the numbers are increasing.

"I think men's crew is definitely going to be a success just looking at the initial group of people. We're not a large team yet, but we were a lot smaller when we first started," Kasturi said.

Students have tried creating a men's crew team in past years, but there was never enough interest. "We're growing in popularity and once we go to competitions and hopefully do well, we'll gain more respect within the school," Kasturi said.

Activist Pleased With BOE's Decision to Delay Turf Project

Barry Zucker of Beyond Pesticides Ohio challenges safety of artificial surfaces

KYRA HALL RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

Barry Zucker, University Heights resident and executive director of Beyond Pesticides Ohio, submitted a Sun Press letter to the editor April 10. In the letter, Zucker said he was pleased by the Shaker Board of Education's decision to delay the installation of synthetic turf. Zucker listed reasons why turf is not the solution.

In his letter, he explained that the installation and removal of synthetic turf are very costly. "There is no easy way to dispose of hundreds of tons of worn out plastic and rubber," he stated.

Zucker also cited health risks from synthetic turf. "Synthetic turf must be disinfected regularly to remove body fluid spills as well as bacteria," he stated. Athletes have been documented with skin infections from playing on synthetic turf. Besides infections, synthetic turf is made up of chemicals that also pose health risks.

"Most synthetic turf fields are crumb rubber from tires which carry toxic chemicals that can be inhaled or absorbed through the skin," he stated.

Another disadvantage Zucker explained is how synthetic turf can reach temperatures above 160 degrees.

Though Zucker makes many accurate points about the disadvantages of synthetic turf, Shaker does not have the resources to maintain natural grass fields that require constant maintenance.

Beyond Pesticides Ohio is an organization to show health issues posed by pesticides. The organizations website states, "Beyond Pesticides Ohio seeks to protect the public, in particular the most vulnerable (children and the chemically sensitive), by promoting safe and effective alternatives to the use of toxic chemicals."

Zucker ended his letter stating, "Synthetic turf is not the solution." Zucker did not respond to email or phone inquiries.

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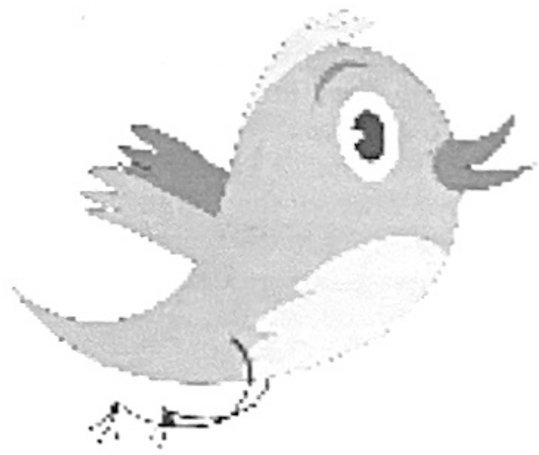
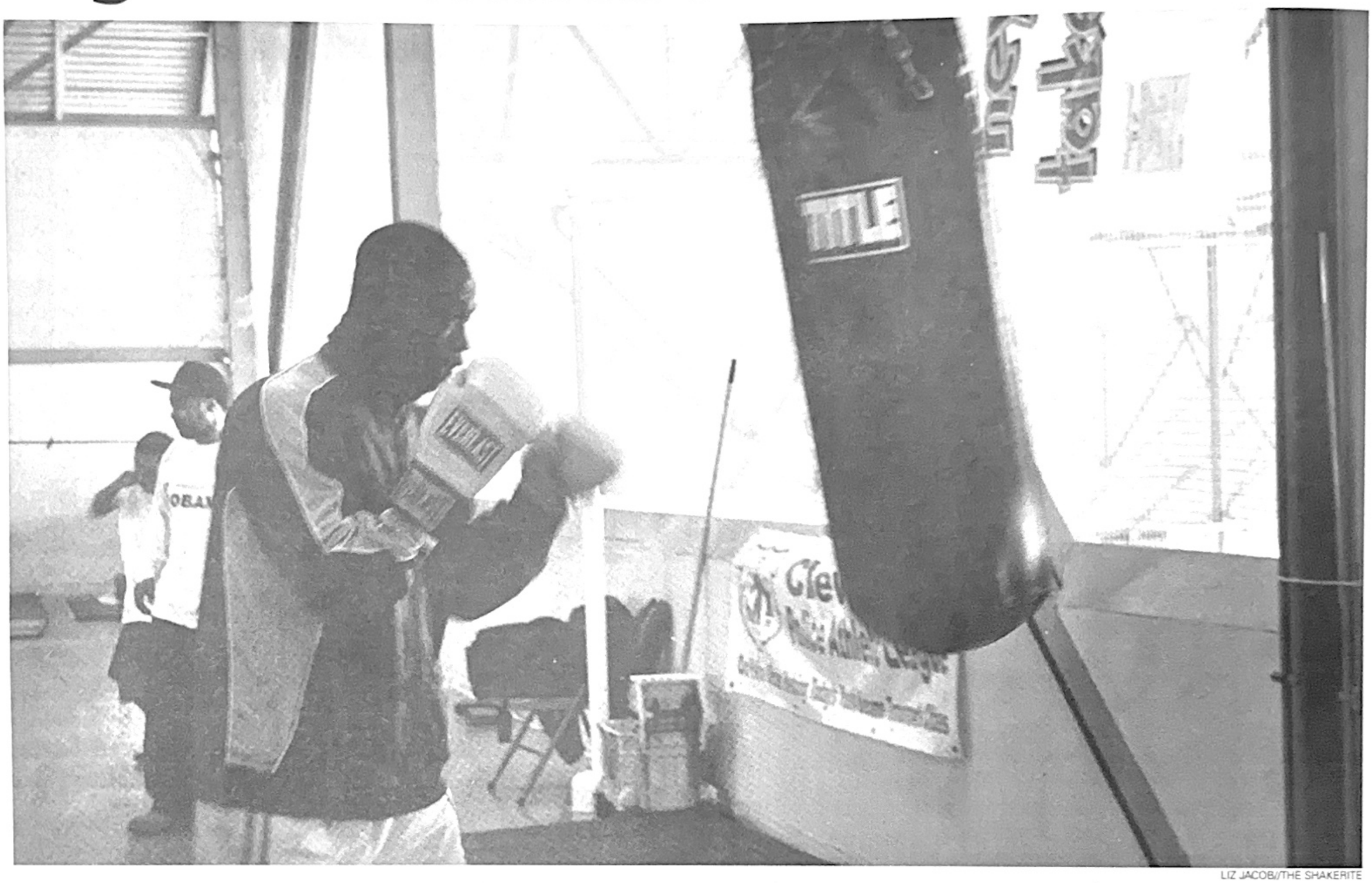


@RZ_Shakerite

Pugilistic Patterson Will Pull No Punches



LIZ JACOB//THE SHAKERITE

Senior Levi Patterson hits a punching bag April 16 at the Zelma Watson George Recreation Center, where he practices five or six times weekly. Romeo Conner, his coach, stands past him. Patterson won the 2011 Cleveland Golden Gloves tournament and his all-time record is 34-6. "He's got world class potential," Conner said.

Senior Levi Patterson puts up a fight sparring against pros

IAN ROUND RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

When watching Levi Patterson strike a punching bag with lightning-quick hands, you feel sorry for the bag, wondering what it did to deserve this abuse.

"My hands are as fast as Floyd's," Patterson jokes, referring to Floyd Mayweather, arguably the best professional boxer in the world.

Patterson is such a good boxer that his coach, Romeo Conner, brings in the best young professional boxers in Cleveland to spar with him.

"That's when I first started realizing this sport is for me, when I started whooping on pros," Patterson said.

Patterson whooped on the competition and won the 2011 Cleveland Golden Gloves tournament, which sent him to the national Golden Gloves. His record is 34-6; his ultimate goal is to box for the 2016 U.S. Olympic team.

Patterson's father introduced him to boxing his freshman year. "I always used to get into fights, and my dad said, 'Might as well start boxing to take your anger out in a positive way.' "

"That's how I knew I was getting better, when I started beating up pros."

LEVI PATTERSON

Patterson practices for two hours five or six times weekly at the Zelma Watson George Recreation Center in Cleveland.

"When I first started boxing in the ninth grade, I didn't really tell a lot of people because I thought they were gonna look at me differently," he said. "Now it's different; I'll be walking down the street and people say, 'Hey, aren't you that guy, Levi Patterson?' "

Patterson said that being in the ring and facing punches was stressful and disconcerting at first, but he adjusted. "He adapted real quick," Conner said.

Patterson won the 2011 Cleveland Golden Gloves at 152 lbs. after knocking out his opponent in the second round of the championship match.

"I dropped a guy . . . and he got up wobbly," he said. "When I came out of the ring, I got embraced by everybody. It felt great."

But, of course, you can't win all the time. Patterson lost in the national tournament after the Cleveland Golden Gloves. "When I know I didn't give it my all, I just cry. I think about what people think about me," he said.

He said he never feels sorry for those he hurts because they wouldn't sympathize with him if they KO'd him. "When I started boxing, my coach told me, 'Show no remorse. Don't feel sorry for anybody,'" Patterson said.

Conner found young professionals to spar with Patterson to give him more exposure and experience. Patterson held his own, or better.

"I compete with the top of the line, the best," Patterson said.

"He doesn't completely dominate them, they don't completely dominate him," Conner said.

"If he was getting beat up and busted up, I wouldn't put him in there. . . Levi has sparred with a lot of the top boxers in Cleveland at an early age," Conner said, rattling off a list of names.

"He can go a long way, a looong way," Conner said. "He's got world class potential. He's not the average guy that walks in the gym. . . In the boxing community, everybody knows Levi."

BBCOR Bats Bring Us Back to Batting Basics

KYRA HALL
RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

New bat requirements are in effect for 2012 high school baseball season.

Ball Exit Speed Ratio bats are now prohibited in high school and college.

Balls struck by a BESR bat can easily travel more than 105 mph. The NCAA switched to Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution bats last year; they are said to absorb more energy at impact, slowing the ball's reentry into the field to 94 mph on average.

"On those cold game days, the BBCOR bats don't give you that little push like the BESR bats did. Other than that, if you hit it on the sweet spot, the ball doesn't come off much differently," sophomore Patrick Lamb said.

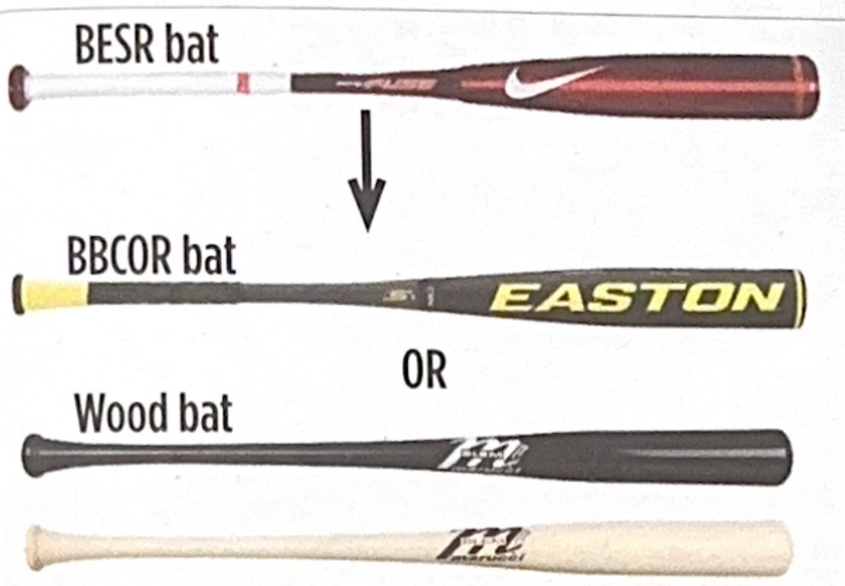
At lower temperatures, a hitter experiences a stinging sensation from powerful vibrations caused by contact.

Manufactures suggest that graphite-aluminum composite bats are not used below 60 degrees.

Shaker players use wood bats in the batting cages, but not in games. "The BBCOR still has more pop than the wooden bats we use. People find it more difficult to hit hard with a wooden bat, so I think we look at it as more of a training challenge," Lamb said.

NCAA research found that composite previously used in high school and college had increased ball exit speeds by 10-15 mph. BBCOR bats have a much smaller sweet spot than BESR bats, so outfield flares become infield pop-ups.

This change emphasizes fundamental baseball skills such as smart base running and bunting. It also distributes pressure to each player, rather than to a team's power hitters.



Going Old School at the Plate

$250-400
BBCOR bat cost

$65-80
high quality wood bat cost

$$BESR = \frac{V_{ball\ exit} + \frac{1}{2}(V_{pitch} - V_{bat})}{V_{pitch} + V_{bat}}$$

$$BBCOR = \frac{v_R}{v_I}(1+r) + r + C_{ball}$$

An NCAA study into bat safety included some hefty calculations. Above, the forumlas for calculating the allowable speed ratio for balls leaving BESR and BBCOR bats at contact. St. Ignatius switched to wood bats for this season.

By the Numbers

3″
length of the sweet spot of a BBCOR bat

5″
length of the sweet spot on a BESR bat

45%
fewer homeruns in the 2011 NCAA season than 2010

97%
of pitchers hit in 1997-98 faced hitters using metal bats

6%
of those pitchers were hit in the face

Hitters Feel Safe With the Pitcher Farther From Home

High school hurlers now on par with college peers, and hitters gain advantange of an extra split second

KYRA HALL
RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

Safety concerns pushed the high school pitching distance from 40 feet to 43 feet during the 2011 softball season.

The NCAA distance has been 43 feet since 1987, leaving pitchers with extra reaction time and hitters a split second longer to interpret the pitch. This change allows high school players to adjust before college ball.

Sophomore pitcher Mia Wang believes that the bigger advantage now lies with the hitter.

"They have a longer time to react to my pitch. But on the plus side, having the extra three feet makes my pitches move more and makes my changeup more effective," Wang said.

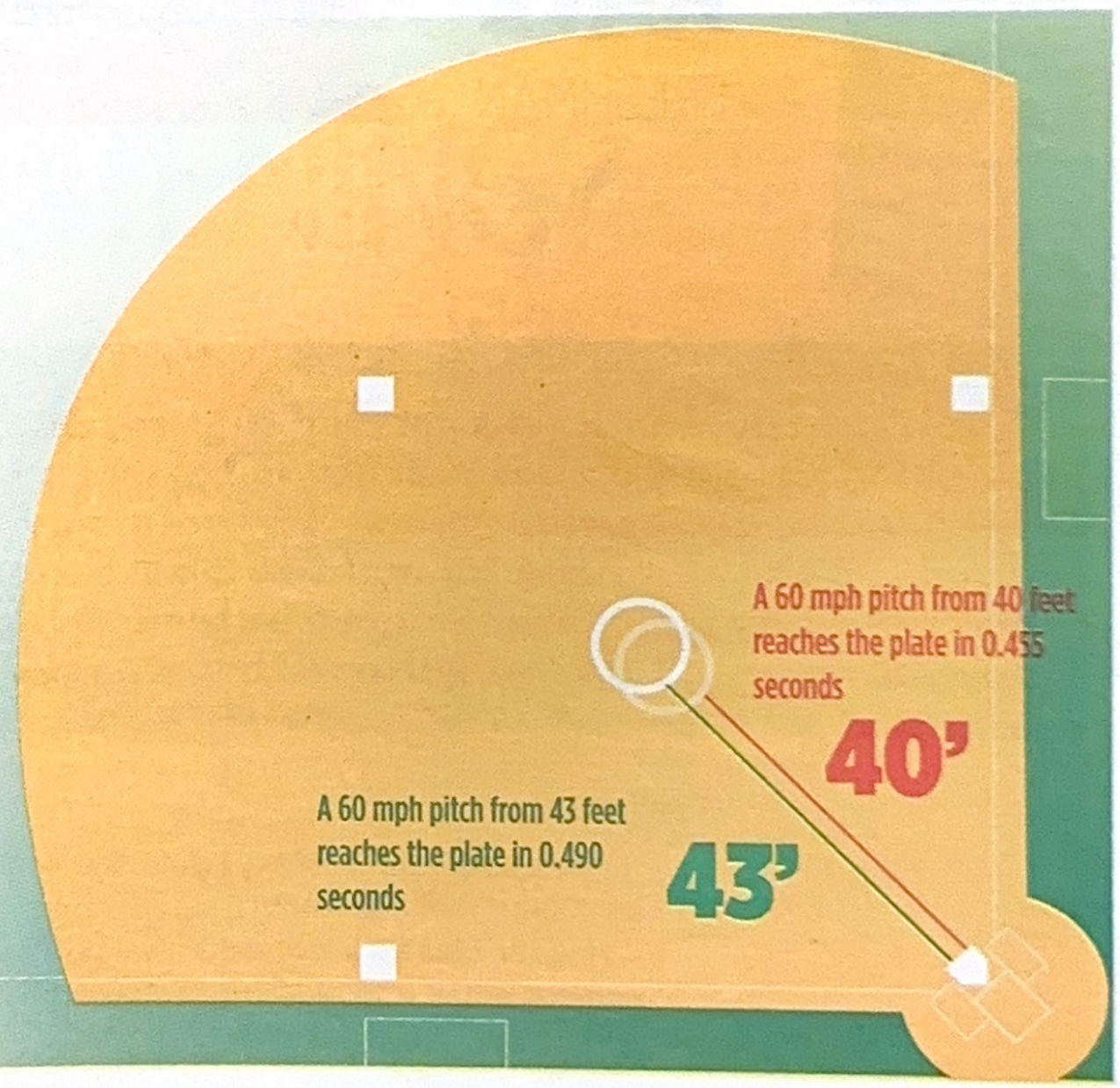
Though the high school pitching distance moved back last year, most travel leagues already pitched from 43 feet. Last season's adjustment ensures consitency among all levels of play.

"It took some time to adjust, but in the end, it makes the game more interesting for the fielders and the hitters," Wang said.

"The hitters don't have to just guess if a pitch is a strike or not."

"It took some time to adjust, but in the end it makes the game more interesting for the fielders and the hitters. The hitters don't have to just guess if a pitch is a strike or not."

MIA WANG


A 60 mph pitch from 40 feet reaches the plate in 0.455 seconds
40'
A 60 mph pitch from 43 feet reaches the plate in 0.490 seconds
43'

Talking About TRAYVON MARTIN

The killing of Trayvon Martin, an African-American, by George Zimmerman, a Latino, quickly grew from a tragedy in Florida to a national race issue. In a city such as Shaker that prides itself on racial integration, it's no wonder that this topic is being discussed in the hallways, in the classroom and on TV.

With all of the differing viewpoints on the subject portrayed in the media, we felt it was important to figure out how Shaker students really felt about the issue. We asked some students their opinion: Do you think that race played a factor in the killing of Trayvon Martin?

"I do, because he [Zimmerman] rushed to conclusions, thinking that he [Trayvon] was up to no good, because it was a black boy wearing a hoodie in a nice neighborhood."

ERICA STUBBS
SENIOR

"No, I personally think this whole thing was blown way out of proportion, and it turned into a 'black-vs.-white' thing, instead of focusing on the fact that a kid died."

NOA KATZ
FRESHMAN

"I believe the death was related to race, due to the previous and current struggle between Latino and African-American gangs. A hoodie may have provoked the shooting by making Zimmerman think the boy was gang-related or looked like a thug. However, I do not believe that was the case."

BRAD KRUITHOFF
SOPHOMORE

Have something to say? Join the conversation at shakerite.com by searching "Talking About."

Have an idea for a future discussion? Post it to The Shakerite's Facebook page or email it to shakerite@shaker.org along with your name.

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